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THANKS TO A GROWING ACCEPTANCE OF ONLINE DATING, MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE FINDING TRUE LOVE PAGES 6 & 7

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'Peggers stunned as Pope resigns

March conclave. Next pontiff to be elected in a world of social media

BERNICE PONTANILLA
bernice.pontanilla@metronews.ca

The resignation of the leader of the world's Roman Catholic Church caught millions by surprise, including here in Winnipeg.

On Monday, Pope Benedict XVI, 85, said he lacked the strength to fulfil his duties and on Feb. 28 will become the first pontiff in 600 years to resign.

The announcement sets the stage for a conclave in March to elect a new leader for the world's one billion Catholics.

Dr. Christopher Adams, rector at the University of Manitoba's St. Paul's College, said he was surprised by the announcement.

"Looking back on it, I should not have been," he said, adding that Pope Benedict was already 78 when he was chosen to lead the Church in 2005.

Adams said he's looking forward to seeing who is elected during the conclave, since that will signal which direction the Church is headed.

"There is no heir apparent," he said.

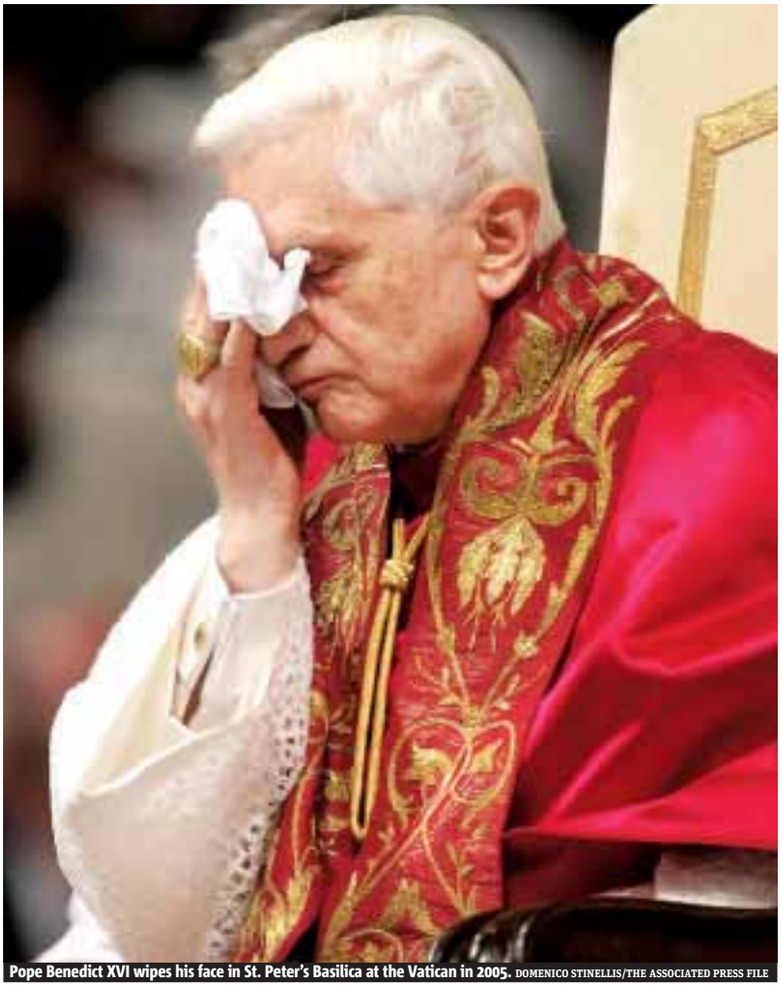
"Now we wonder; will it be a Latin American or a Filipino (pope) ... I think we might be in for a surprise."

Contenders to succeed include Cardinal Marc Ouellet, the Canadian head of the Vatican's office for bishops.

Matt Semchyshyn, president of the St. Paul's College Student Association, said if Ouellet is chosen, it would be "great for Canada."

"It would mean a lot to Catholic Canadians," said the 21-year-old recreation management student.

Calls to Archbishop of Winnipeg James Weisgerber were not returned by press time.



Pope Benedict XVI wipes his face in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican in 2005. DOMENICO STINELLIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Plane crash claims 4 lives

Single-dad pilot was flying with his boys and their friend PAGE 3

Where's the horsemeat?

Everywhere in Europe it seems, as fraud scandal grows PAGE 8

Mmm ... tastes like a hot date

Wondering what to eat to keep your love life sweet? PAGE 12

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Trial

A tale of two officers

A military panel weighing the fate of a retired warrant officer has been presented with two very different pictures of him — a reckless weapons expert who caused a fellow soldier's death, or a conscientious leader who did the best he could under trying circumstances.

"Hindsight is 20-20. The temptation is very strong to adopt the attitude of ... a Monday-morning office quarterback," Maj. Philippe-Luc Boutin, lawyer for Paul Ravensdale, said in his closing arguments at a court martial Monday.

"Warrant officer Ravensdale does not ask for pity or compassion. Warrant officer Ravensdale only asks that justice is done."

Ravensdale faces six charges: manslaughter, unlawfully causing bodily harm, two counts of breach of duty and two counts of negligence. They stem from an exercise he led on a weapons range in Afghanistan on Feb. 12, 2010.

The soldiers were training on C-19 anti-personnel land mines, which are designed to shoot 700 steel ball bearings forward in a fan pattern. One of the mines fired backward instead, directly toward soldiers who thought they were out of harm's way.

Four ball bearings struck Cpl. Joshua Baker, including one in the chest that killed him. Four other soldiers were injured.

The prosecution, led by Maj. Tony Tamburro, alleges Ravensdale ignored safety guidelines that personnel be at least 100 metres behind a C-19 unless they are in a dugout, a vehicle or covered by some sort of shield.

The court martial was shown video of soldiers standing in direct sight of the mine and much closer than 100 metres.

In his closing argument, Tamburro urged the five-member military panel to convict Ravensdale.

"He let people stand out in the open while the weapon was being fired. It's not as if he didn't know. He was right there."

Tamburro said Ravensdale bore responsibility as the person in charge of the exercise and as the man who gave the orders to fire.

Boutin countered that Ravensdale was put in a near-impossible situation by being assigned to run the exercise, act as officer in charge of the soldiers and perform as the range safety officer. The latter is supposed to be assigned to a separate person.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Will he like us? 'Peg's new polar bear to meet public on Valentine's Day

The Assiniboine Park Zoo has a cute and furry present to share with Winnipeg this Valentine's Day.

The zoo will introduce us to Hudson, the 15-month-old polar bear who arrived at the zoo's new International Polar Bear Conservation Centre late last month.

"He's very relaxed in his new home and he certainly loves the snow and winter weather," said Tim Sinclair-Smith, the zoo's director of zoological operations, in a release.

Hudson is the first polar bear making his temporary home in the IPBCC.

Winnipeggers can meet him Thursday at 11:30 a.m.

METRO

Hudson the polar bear HANDOUT

Don't look now but ...

David MacNair stands with a snow sculpture of Assiniboine Park Zoo's new polar bear, Hudson, which he and a team of three other artists created to be displayed in front of the Manitoba Legislative Building. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Three boys, pilot killed in plane crash

Waskada. Experienced pilot took two sons and their friend out for a weekend treat

Logan and Gage Spence died in a plane crash on Sunday, along with their father Darren, and Dawson Pentecost. FACEBOOK.COM

Darren Spence was a dedicated dad who built his two young sons their own dirt-bike racing track, drove them to hockey practice and, on some weekends, took them up in the air for a ride.

The experienced crop-dusting pilot from Waskada, Man. owned a couple of work planes as well as a six-seater Cessna 210, which crashed near the small town on Sunday.

Friends confirmed Monday that Spence, 37, died in the crash along with his sons, who were 9 and 10, and a nine-year-old family friend, Dawson Pentecost.

"After a weekend, it was a treat to take the kids flying and they would just go and look over the countryside," said close pal Terry Linto.

"The kids loved it."

Investigators said the single-engine plane left a private airstrip near Waskada on Sunday afternoon and headed 110 kilometres northeast to Brandon.

The plane's emergency beacon went off and a military search-and-rescue plane from Winnipeg found the wreckage in a field about five kilometres from the airstrip. A rescue crew parachuted down to the crash site. Everyone on board was dead.

Peter Hildebrand, regional manager for the Transportation Safety Board, said it wasn't yet clear why the plane crashed.

The aircraft was so severely damaged that investigators couldn't determine if its landing gear was down, he said.

Investigators were looking into both the mechanics of the plane and the weather.

Linto said Spence's passion for flying was matched by his love for his children. He said the single dad raised his boys, Gage and Logan, and also had a young daughter at home.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Agnes Street

Man in critical condition after stabbing

A man was taken to hospital in critical condition after being stabbed in the West End early Monday.

Officers were called to the 400 block of Agnes Street around 4:45 a.m. where police believe the 32-year-old victim walked to after being stabbed somewhere nearby.

Neighbours tell Metro that police cordoned off a number of houses on the street with tape while searching for a suspect or suspects early Monday, but a police spokesperson said he wasn't aware of any arrests by later in the day.

The investigation continues in its early stages.

METRO

Garden City

Police search for restaurant robber

Police are looking for a man after an armed suspect robbed a Garden City area restaurant Sunday night.

The suspect made off with an undisclosed amount of cash after confronting the 41-year-old male clerk at the restaurant in the 2100 block of McPhillips Street around 8 p.m.

The suspect is described as white, five-foot ten, 35-40 years old, with a thin build and short graying/white hair.

Anyone with information should call police at 204-986-6219 or CrimeStoppers at 204-786-TIPS. METRO

West End

Suspect sought in store robbery

Police are looking for a suspect after an armed man robbed a West End area convenience store Sunday. The suspect took cash and lottery tickets after threatening the male employees working at the store in the 600 block of Ellice Avenue around 8:10 p.m.

The suspect is described as aboriginal, 35-40 years old, with a stocky build and a moustache. METRO

METRO CUSTOM PUBLISHING

Transit Tuesday

Weekly Transit News Update

CALL FOR DELEGATES: LEADING THE WAY YOUTH SUMMIT

If you are between 18 and 28, with a keen interest in transit and sustainable transportation, you can apply to be a delegate at the Leading the Way Youth Summit on Sustainable Transportation taking place May 10-12 in Calgary. This regional youth summit event is presented by the Prairies and Territories Chapter and the B.C. Committee of the Canadian Urban Transit Association and hosted locally by Calgary Transit.

Delegates will have the opportunity to learn, share ideas, network, and explore career paths with like-minded peers and professionals in transit and related industries. Inspiring speakers, sessions on best practices in transit and sustainable transportation, a career fair and social activities round out this weekend summit focused on communities in western Canada. Accommodation, travel and meals are provided for delegates who are selected to participate. Application deadline is Monday, Feb. 25. To find out more or to apply, visit LeadingtheWayYouthSummit.com.

DID YOU LOSE OR FIND SOMETHING ON THE BUS?

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Talk to your HR rep about getting the EcoPass at your workplace. You and your fellow employees could save from 5 per cent to 100 per cent on transit. Visit the website for more information.

Education Minister Nancy Allan announced an extra $4-million in new funding Monday for school divisions to hire more teachers and reduce class sizes in kindergarten to Grade 3 classrooms over the 2013-2014 school year.

SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Funding OK'd for K-3 teachers

Class size. Money to go toward reducing number of students in classrooms

SHANE GIBSON
shane.gibson@metronews.ca

The Manitoba government will pump an extra $4-million to school divisions over the 2013-14 school year with the aim of reducing the number of students per teacher in kindergarten to Grade 3 classrooms provincewide.

The money announced Monday brings the province's total funding for their class size initiative — which requires all kindergarten to Grade 3 classes be capped at 20 students by September 2017 — to $7-million in 2013-14.

New hires

Twelve of the 69 teachers to be hired in 2013-14 are slotted for the Winnipeg School Division.
SOURCE: NANCY ALLAN

"We know how important it is when young people get a good start in the early years," said Education Minister Nancy Allan after announcing the new funding in front of students at John M. King School Monday morning. "This is an important initiative — it's going to provide another 69 teachers in school divisions to reduce class sizes."

The funding comes over and above the $27.2-million in new provincial education funding Allan announced for Manitoba schools late last month.

The province's Class Size Initiative was announced in 2011 and last year saw 79 teachers hired on at 31 school divisions.

Allan pointed to a 20 per cent reduction in kindergarten to Grade 3 classrooms with 24 or more students and a 13.7 per cent increase in of those classes with 20 or fewer students as examples of the initiatives early success.

Norm Gould, vice-president of the Manitoba Teachers' Society, said reducing the number of students in Manitoba classrooms is something his organization has long advocated for.

"The less students that you have in a classroom at the early levels, means a greater chance that those teachers can make valuable connections and hopefully ensure those students can have greater success," he said.

Overdose

Drug dealer on trial for allegedly selling morphine to girl who OD'd

A trial starting in a Winnipeg courtroom could determine if dealers can be held responsible for the death of someone using their drugs.

Curtis Haas, who is 51, has pleaded not guilty to manslaughter in the death of 20-year-old Wendy Henry.

Henry died in 2007 when she overdosed on morphine she was allegedly provided by Haas. Haas is also charged with drug trafficking and criminal negligence causing death. The Crown has indicated it will rely on expert witnesses and statements given to police by the accused.

Police have said a conviction could open the door for similar charges in the future. The trial was supposed to begin more than six months ago, but the judge was forced to postpone it when a doctor said Haas was stressed out and had been rushed to hospital.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/CJOB

Human Rights

Museum welcomes new vice-chair

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights has promoted a University of Northern British Columbia dean to vice-chair of the Museum's board of trustees.

James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, announced on Monday the appointment of John Fitzgerald Young as vice-chair of the Museum's board of trustees for a four-year term.

"I am delighted that Mr. Young has accepted the invitation to serve as vice-chair of the board of trustees," said Moore in a press release. METRO

Historic Manitoba. Website boasts rare documents, photos

Manitobia, a historical website that "highlights the role of our province in the early history of the country," has completed its first phase. "The publication of the histories of towns and municipalities goes back to the 1880s, with an estimated 1,200 known to be in print and more added all the time," reads a press release from the University of Manitoba, which partnered on the website with the Manitoba Historical Society.

"These publications, often a labour of love for the communities, were produced in small numbers and are now often hard to find. They record the stories, memories and development of towns across Manitoba.

"The availability of this information online through Manitobia brings them to the desktops and tablets of genealogists, historians, researchers and former Manitobans anywhere and anytime."

Manitobia can be found at manitobia.ca. METRO

Crime. Teen charged after serious sexual assault in Winnipeg

A 14-year-old boy is in police custody after a female youth was seriously sexually assaulted during a break-in at an Elmwood area home over the weekend.

Police were called to a break-in in progress at the home around 6:30 on Saturday evening, when attending officers found a male suspect committing a serious sexual assault involving a female youth victim.

The suspect fled but was taken into custody without incident after a short foot chase.

The teenaged suspect is charged with break-and-enter, two counts of sexual assault with a weapon, forcible confinement, robbery with theft, uttering threats to cause death or bodily harm, and failing to comply with the conditions of an undertaking.

METRO

Pope Benedict XVI raised the possibility of resigning in 2010, calling it acceptable for ill health but not for escaping burden or scandal. FRANCO ORIGLIA/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Papal end of days to be chaotic yet stable

Benedict XVI resigns. After breaking 600-year taboo, pope holds great sway over successor vote

Declaring that he lacks the strength to do his job, Pope Benedict XVI announced Monday he will resign Feb. 28 — becoming the first pontiff to step down in 600 years. His decision sets the stage for a mid-March conclave to elect a new leader for a Catholic Church in deep turmoil.

The 85-year-old pope dropped the bombshell in Latin during a meeting of Vatican cardinals, surprising even his closest collaborators even though he had made clear previously that he would step down if he became too old or infirm to carry on.

The move allows the Vatican to hold a conclave before Easter to elect a new pope, since the traditional nine days of mourning following the death of a pope don't have to be observed.

It will also allow Benedict to hold great sway over the choice of his successor, though he will not vote. He has already handpicked the bulk of the College of Cardinals — who will elect the next pope — to guarantee his conservative legacy and ensure an orthodox future for the church.

Benedict in 2007 passed a decree requiring a two-thirds majority to elect a pope, changing the rules established by John Paul who had decided that the voting could shift to a simple majority after about 12 days of inconclusive voting. Benedict did so to prevent cardinals from merely holding out until the 12 days had passed to push through a candidate who had only a slim majority.

The Vatican stressed that no specific medical condition prompted Benedict's decision, that he remained fully lucid and made his decision independently.

It has been obvious to all that the pope has slowed down significantly in recent years, cutting back his foreign travel and limiting his audiences. He now goes to and from the altar in St. Peter's Basilica on a moving platform to spare him the long walk down the aisle.

Benedict emphasized that carrying out the duties of being pope requires "both strength of mind and body."

When Benedict was elected in 2005 at age 78, he was the oldest pope chosen in nearly 300 years. At the time, he had already been planning to retire as the Vatican's chief orthodoxy watchdog to spend his final years writing in the "peace and quiet" of his native Bavaria.

Cardinal Andre Vingt-Trois, the archbishop of Paris, called Monday's decision a "liberating act for the future," saying popes from now on will no longer feel compelled to stay on until their death.

"One could say that in a certain manner, Pope Benedict XVI broke a taboo," he told reporters in Paris.

Benedict said he would serve the church for the remainder of his days "through a life dedicated to prayer." The Vatican said that, immediately after his February resignation, Benedict would go to Castel Gandolfo, the papal summer retreat south of Rome, and then would live in a cloistered monastery.

During his tenure, Benedict tried to reawaken Christianity in Europe, where it had fallen by the wayside, and return the church to its traditional roots, which he felt had been betrayed by an incorrect interpretation of the modernizing reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

His efforts though, were overshadowed by a worldwide clerical sex-abuse scandal. Many of his stated priorities as pope also fell short. He failed to establish relations with China, heal the schism and reunite with the Orthodox Church or reconcile with a group of breakaway, traditionalist Catholics.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Succession odds

God does not play dice — but we do

Bookmakers have been quick to offer odds on candidates to replace Pope Benedict XVI, with cardinals from Ghana, Nigeria and Canada among the early favourites.

Ghana's Cardinal Peter Turkson, Canada's Cardinal Marc Ouellet and Cardinal Francis Arinze of Nigeria lead in betting with Britain's major bookmakers.

William Hill made Turkson — one of the highest-ranking African cardinals at the Vatican — its 3-1 favourite Monday, followed by Ouellet at 7-2 and Arinze at 4-1. Ladbrokes also had Turkson as favourite, followed by Arinze and Ouellet.

Ireland's Paddy Power also offered short odds on the three, as well as long odds on unlikely candidates — including U2 singer Bono at 1,000-1.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Crossroads

Feds defend grant to anti-gay group

International Co-operation Minister Julian Fantino says money for foreign aid projects is handed out based on results, not religion.

Fantino defended a $544,813 federal grant to Crossroads Christian Communications, a group that has called homosexuality a sin, Monday in the House.

New Democrat Helene Laverdiere claimed many groups struggle for funding, while "religious groups that promote their ideology have Conservative connections." THE CANADIAN PRESS

P4 and P5

Go online to name Pluto's tiny moons

Astronomers announced a contest Monday to name the two itty-bitty moons of Pluto discovered over the past two years.

Pluto is named for the Roman lord of the underworld, and its three bigger moons have related names: Charon, Nix and Hydra.

Styx and Cerberus were leading as of Monday night. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Google alert

Myanmar denies hacking reporters

Myanmar's government denied on Monday that it was behind a possible attempt to hack into the email accounts of journalists who Google warned may have been the targets of "state-sponsored attackers."

At least 12 reporters received warnings from Google last week when they tried to access their Gmail accounts.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem

Women detained for male holy garb

Israeli police detained 10 women Monday, including the sister of comic Sarah Silverman, as they tried to pray at a Jerusalem holy site, the head of a liberal Jewish women's group said.

Anat Hoffman, who was among those detained, said the women were stopped because they were wearing religious garb that Orthodox Judaism reserves for men. The incident occurred at the Western Wall.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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There are hits ... and there are misses

A jacket named Fred, and other e-dating horror stories

While there are many success stories thanks to online dating, there are definitely some dates stemming from the Internet that don't turn out so well.

"This girl would barely speak to me on dates, but as soon as the date was over (sometimes even before I had made it back to my car) I would get text messages or emails about how well she thought things were going, and asking if I wanted to pursue a relationship with her."

Miguel D., 33

"I stopped talking to a guy that I was getting creepy vibes from and didn't want to pursue meeting.

After being at my parents' house over Christmas though, I found out he had been trying to add my mom to Facebook for a couple of months — but I never give out any information other than my first name."

Jenna B., 23

"After two days of texting, this 25-year-old asked me what I was doing, to which I replied: 'Not much, just got out of The Hobbit.' He replied: 'What is that?! Some weird sex position?'

And now his number is blocked."

Steph D., 26

"Last year, the day before Valentine's Day, I met 'Fred.' We met at a downtown coffee shop. Jason walked in and he looked nothing like his profile picture. Wearing jeans and a denim jacket, he took off his outer leather jacket and flopped it onto a neighbouring chair. When a passerby asked if she could use the chair, Jason grabbed his jacket and yelled 'Fred!' (what he named his jacket) 'Come back here and don't run away again!'

Jason then spanked the poor coat and threw it over his shoulder.

I was too embarrassed to even look at the girl dragging the chair away."

Amy C., 23

COMPILED BY HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO

ALL EMOTICONS ISTOCK IMAGES

Got an e-dating-gone-wrong story of your own? Email us at readers@metronews.ca.

THEY FOUND LOVE I

Click! In the name love. Edmonton-area couples have been meeting online for years. The difference now is more admit it, as growing numbers sign up in search of the same success

HEATHER MCINTYRE
Metro in Edmonton

The first time was the charm for Heather Watson.

Her initial attempt at online dating through Plenty of Fish led somewhere she didn't think it would: marriage, two kids and a third on the way.

After moving to Grande Prairie, Alta., from Edmonton, Watson signed up for online dating. A couple of months after registering, she met Nicholas in November 2008. He became her husband in July 2010.

"At the time I was very busy managing a female-clothing store," said Watson, now 26. "That didn't invoke a lot of interaction with men, and I had heard that it was easier to meet men (online)."

According to Plenty of Fish, Watson is one of the lucky ones. The website states: "If you are in contact with 100 different singles, 50 per cent of the time your future partner is in the top 10, and 17 per cent of the time we can pick the exact person you will end up dating."

All in all, those aren't bad odds, said Edmonton personal relationship consultant Ryan Jakovljevic, of Evolve Personal Coaching and Counselling, noting that one in five couples today begin their relationship online.

The 25-year-old believes the growth in use of the partnership method has to do with a fear of rejection, and a draw toward being able to "sift through people and find somebody you think you're highly probable to like and enjoy being around without having to deal with a face-to-face awkward meeting."

Of course, those who have signed up to virtually meet others have done so for different reasons.

For 41-year-old Edmonton man Robin Taylor, who met wife Andrea, 40, nine years ago on Lavalife, it was due to where he was at in his life.

"I had come out of a long-term relationship and … I was 32, so my previous dating experience prior to that was in my 20s. The world had changed and I wanted to change with it," he said.

For 25-year-old Catherine Dowhaniuk, who signed up for Lavalife at the tender age of 16, it was in order to make new friends and meet people. She didn't expect to meet Mark, now 32. The Spruce Grove couple married in 2010.

"I think it's a great way to meet people, especially if you're busy all the time," she said. "Whether you make friendships or actually find that person that you love, it's still a great experience altogether."

While they preach the success of online dating because they are proof it can work, those who met through the Internet nearly 10 years ago have a different outlook on the process of filling out a

Mixing technology and romance is no longer seen as taboo — as our models demonstrate inset, fuel the popularity of e-dating. HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO

Give thanks to these forebears

Yahoo! Rise of web-based hubs fuels possibilities for romance online

COMPILED BY LAURIE CALLSEN/METRO

- **1994:** Kiss.com is launched. The site is still active and boasts 12 million users.
- **1996:** Sixteen online dating websites are listed on Yahoo!
- **1998:** The Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks rom-com You've Got Mail helps bring online dating to the mainstream.
- **2002:** Friendster and MySpace are created, adding another realm where users can interact (and fall in love) online.

N AN ONLINE SPACE

— now that more and more online success stories, like those of Robin and Andrea Taylor and Mark and Catherine Dowhaniuk,

Quoted

"For the most part, you can try to match up with other people as best as you can, but of course it still doesn't guarantee when you meet that the chemistry will be there. But there's no harm in trying."

Ryan Jakovljevic, Edmonton personal relationship consultant

questionnaire and chatting through email leading up to a first date now than they did when they were doing it.

Laura Frey met husband Jason on Lavalife in 2003. The Edmonton pair went on their first date on Valentine's Day in 2004, were married the same day five years later, and now have two children.

"We didn't even tell people how we met," said Frey, 32. "If people asked me, I would totally avoid the question because I was embarrassed — whereas now I just tell people because it's normal and everyone does it."

In fact, according to Lavalife, more than 1.7 million members exchange more than 700,000 messages every day. Plenty of Fish boasts more than seven million conversations daily.

That change in attitude, and the growing number of people signing up for the sites looking to find a match, prove there is less of a stigma about the idea in 2013 than there used to be.

But that doesn't mean it's easy.

Valerie Bielenda didn't meet her husband, Mark, whom she married in 2006, until signing up for Lavalife a second time in 2004.

"When I went back online the second time, the first guy I met, he was kind of a sleaze," said the 36-year-old Edmonton woman. "So when you meet somebody like that it's discouraging because you're thinking, 'His profile picture is nice, his pictures are nice — seems like a nice guy' and then you meet him and all he wants is one thing.

"So it's discouraging, but … you just have to keep at it."

Criticisms of online dating are that the websites promote hooking up, social isolation and easy options that could attract wandering eyes.

Jakovljevic admits it doesn't always work.

"Dating is largely based on whether or not you feel that attraction, that sort of connection like maybe you have known this person for a long time even if you haven't. And we still don't know quite what on paper creates that — is it similarities? Is it differences? Is it experiences? And although we're getting closer, online dating still hasn't found a way to describe that."

But it is now a mainstream way to form relationships that will succeed and fail, perhaps on a similar level as the ones that start in the grocery store, at the coffee shop, through friends or in the bar, he added.

"I would say that more people succeed than not, put it that way."

Playing the odds

1 in 5

According to Edmonton personal relationship consultant Ryan Jakovljevic, one in five couples meet online nowadays.

Exclusively online

For all our stories on online dating, including infographics, video and more, go to metronews.ca/datingfeature

HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO

HE HAD COFFEE, SHE HAD TEA

If you're searching for your soulmate online, the Bielendas' love match may give you hope

When Valerie Bielenda went on a date to a Second Cup in downtown Edmonton back in 2004, she took something most don't on dates.

"I had a friend go and sit so that he could watch me to make sure it was safe," she said with a laugh.

That was because she was meeting Mark, with whom she had initiated a conversation on Lavalife.

There was no need to worry though, as the couple chatted until the coffee shop closed, then moved on to Denny's, where they continued talking.

The pair had started chatting online about a week before they had met.

Valerie, now 36, had been on the site before, and was trying it for a second time.

"Being older — 27, 28 — it's harder to meet people because everybody in your age group is already married or paired up with somebody," she said.

Mark, now 38, said it was simply tough to meet girls at bars, and nothing transpired with those met elsewhere.

The duo married on May 20, 2006, in front of 150 guests.

Many friends, mainly of Mark's, still don't know how they met.

"They don't know, so surprise!" laughed Valerie. "We just kind of never told them that we met online. I think, at the time, they would have bugged him a lot, but it is what it is. We're older now, we don't care.

"And it clearly worked out."

That — and it's more mainstream, added Mark.

"This is just another way of meeting your soulmate."

As the Bielendas, who still remember what one another was wearing, as well as what they had to drink on that first date, await adoption news, they do ponder what will be the next way people meet their partners.

"Twitter," said Valerie. "Isn't that how you meet people nowadays?"

HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO

YAHOO IMAGE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/JUTTA234; YOU'VE GOT MAIL IMAGE: SCREENGRAB/YOUTUBE; ALL OTHER IMAGES SCREENGRABS

- **2004:** Facebook is created.
- **2005:** A Pew Research Centre report estimates that three million Americans had entered into long-term relationships or marriage as a result of meeting on a dating website.
- **2006:** Social-networking website Twitter is created.
- **2007:** Online Dating Magazine says more than 20 million people visit at least one online dating website a day.
- **2009:** An eHarmony survey finds that nearly five per cent of U.S. marriages are from matches made on the site.

Part 2 of 3

YESTERDAY
Is traditional dating dead?

TODAY
The rise of the e-dating jungle

TOMORROW
E-dating success: How to shine online

Who's hiding the horsemeat?

Bogus beef. As equine flesh turns up in frozen dinners, officials realize supply-chain fraud may be quite widespread

A maze of trading between meat wholesalers has made it increasingly difficult to trace the origins of food — enabling horsemeat disguised as beef to be sold in frozen meals across Europe. France's agricultural minister said Monday that regulators must find a way "out of the fog."

The European horsemeat scandal — where the cheaper meat was substituted for beef in everything from burgers to frozen lasagna — is growing, involving more countries, companies and more finger-pointing by the day.

France says Romanian butchers, and Dutch and Cypriot traders were part of a supply chain that resulted in horsemeat being labelled as beef before it was included in frozen dinners including lasagna, moussaka and a similar French dish called hachis parmentier.

Swedish officials were meeting Monday with executives from the biggest supermarket chains to get an overview of how widespread the fraud is, while in Paris top French government officials and meat producers were gathering to get a handle on the crisis, which has snared a French food processing company. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"There are people who are out there to defraud, who are looking to cheat."

France's agriculture minister Stephane Le Foll, speaking to RTL radio.

These Findus Beef Moussaka packs were removed from shelves in a shop in Ville d'Avray, outside Paris, on Monday, after horsemeat was discovered in some frozen meals. A complex web of trading between wholesalers in Europe is making it difficult for officials to figure out exactly who is passing off horsemeat as beef. CHRISTOPHE ENA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Air travel. WestJet to launch new Encore regional service in B.C.

Canadian passengers flying in Western Canada will see some relief from rising airfares this summer as WestJet's new Encore regional service takes flight in June, analysts say.

The airline will add Fort St. John, B.C. to its network and use the first two 78-seat Bombardier Q400s on routes between Vancouver and Victoria, and Calgary to Nanaimo, B.C. Additional routes will be added as it takes delivery of five more planes by the end of the year.

"We are just getting started," said WestJet Encore president Ferio Pugliese, calling the upcoming launch a "historic moment." WestJet Encore's introductory fare on the Fort St. John routes to Vancouver and to Calgary are $109 plus taxes, or up to about $172.

After increasing its regional service in the West, WestJet plans to introduce Encore to Eastern Canada in about nine to 12 months. THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

50%

WestJet says its entry into a new market typically lowers fares by up to 50 per cent and the arrival of Encore is already causing Air Canada to respond with its own fare cuts on some of the routes.

E. coli outbreak

XL Foods review panel will cost up to $3,500 a day

It will cost taxpayers up to $3,500 a day, plus expenses, for a three-member panel to review the E. coli outbreak at an Alberta meat plant last fall. The federal government last week launched a review of the outbreak of the potentially deadly bacteria at the XL Foods Inc. plant in Brooks, Alta.

A cabinet order dated Feb. 5 shows Ronald Lewis, B.C.'s former chief veterinary officer, will be paid up to $1,300 a day to chair the panel. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 99.57¢ (-0.16¢)

TSX 12,748.15 (-53.08)

OIL $97.03 US (+$1.31)

GOLD $1,649.10 US (-$17.80)

Natural gas: $3.29 (+2¢)
Dow Jones: 13,971.24 (-21.73)

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GO LOVE YOURSELF

SHE SAYS...
Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

OK everyone: we need to resurface from underneath the piles of candied sweethearts and overpriced floral bouquets and take a second to breathe. Valentine's Day can be a lovely opportunity to express affection for others, but I'd like you to forget about that for a moment and turn inward to focus on another important kind of love: self love. No, not the home-alone-with-your-laptop-and-a-box-of-tissues kind of self love, but the happiness that comes from being truly confident with who you are.

Cliché as it might sound, you can't be happy with a partner unless you're happy with yourself. Making a conscious decision to love yourself — and that includes embracing all of the so-called flaws that make you you — is a prerequisite to accomplishing your life goals and being content both in and out of romantic relationships.

I don't need your opinion

Sometimes the hardest part about loving yourself is learning how to block out the cynics and manage your own inner monologue of self-doubt.

People born into the millennial generation, with birthdays somewhere between the early 1980s and the early 2000s, are often accused of having a little too much self love. We've been labelled as a coddled cohort of entitled brats, children spoiled with admiration by our helicopter parents who then grow up into narcissistic young adults obsessed with instagramming our own self portraits.

But is having an inflated self-esteem really such a bad thing?

My own piano-lesson-funding parents constantly reassured me that I could be or do anything I wanted and today, aside from momentary bouts of economy-induced insecurity, I believe them. I have an embarrassing number of 'selfies' on my iPhone camera roll because sometimes I think my hair looks really good.

I have wonderful friends, a good job and I can be quite funny sometimes, so I'm told. I don't love myself unconditionally every moment of every day but overall, I think I'm pretty great.

Of course, I've read enough scathing reader comments online to know that there are countless individuals who would disagree with me on my self-evaluation of greatness, but that's OK.

Sometimes the hardest part about loving yourself is learning how to block out the cynics and manage your own inner monologue of self-doubt.

I'm not advocating a cultural shift toward egotistical self-interest, but I think we could all do a better job at feeling good about ourselves and showing it off.

Canadians have a habit of being apologetic and self-deprecating. It's arguably a lot easier — and often more comedic — to simply make fun of ourselves rather than display our confidence outwardly.

But we shouldn't undermine our own self-worth in the name of modesty and agreeableness.

Looking for love this Valentine's Day? Look within. *_ABHI_*/FLICKR

Skirting around winter blahs

THOMAS LOHNES/GETTY IMAGES

Carnival festivities

Umbrella men in skirts revel at fest

On a cold Monday, Germans are in a mood for dancing.

Revellers in Herbstein take part in Springerzug, literally "jumping parade," a local Carnival tradition.

Rose Monday is the high point of the annual Carnival in the region between Mainz, Cologne and Düsseldorf, where since 1823 people celebrate free-spirited merrymaking before Lent. METRO

Satire in float formation

Political parody is central to Carnival

Floats with satirical portrayals of politicians are a traditional part of Carnival celebrations in Germany's Rhineland.

One float in Cologne this year depicts Chancellor Angela Merkel as a mother sow, with piglets wearing European flags suckling at her teats.

In Düsseldorf, Merkel was paraded through the streets with a Hitler-like moustache being drawn on by a Greek. METRO

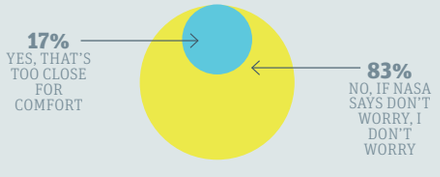
Carnival facts

- **Time.** Carnival week begins on the Thursday before Ash Wednesday and finishes on Ash Wednesday.
- **Origins.** In the early 19th century, fun-loving expression (using parody and mockery) was seen as an act of defiance against Prussian and French occupation. In derision against the orderliness of the Prussian soldiers, locals would don extravagant costumes and carry wooden rifles with flowers protruding from the barrels.
- **Money-maker.** Almost $2.7 billion US of revenue is generated by the carnival season in Germany, according to German Carnival Association.
- **Candy cache.** During Cologne's Shrove Monday (Rose Monday) procession, 330 tons of candy, 700,000 chocolate bars and 220,000 chocolate boxes are thrown into the crowds lining the streets.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

A jet-sized asteroid will come so close to Earth this week that it will be between us and our weather satellites. Are you scared?



Twitter

@jrockarolla: The new Pope should be decided with a boxing match just because I want to hear somebody official say "rope-a-pope."

@Iam_Canadian: I bet the Pope has a horrible Retirement Plan. He had to work until 85. If he planned better he could have been done by 70!

@jeffbbraun: Carly Rae Jepsen shut out at Grammys, Pope retires next day. Coincidence?

@bensigurdson: My first day as copywriter at @DirectFocus and the Pope resigns. Coincidence?

@CarChen: Guess they'll be doing job interviews for the new Pope job? How do you prepare your resume? Find references?

metro

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DVD review

Skyfall

Director. Sam Mendes

Stars. Daniel Craig, Javier Bardem, Naomie Harris

●●●●●

The 23rd official James Bond film seems as fresh as the first did 51 years ago. Daniel Craig's third stint as 007 finds him wounded and besieged, finally dealing with the calendar's cruel accounting.

Bond must fight a threat that is at once more understandable and more complex than in the past. Leering menace Silva (Javier Bardem) has a computer drive containing a list of NATO officials secretly embedded with terrorist organizations. He plans to expose five at a time, putting many lives at risk. Can Bond stop him?

An early chase scene in Istanbul, which thrillingly recalls the parkour start of Casino Royale, raises doubt — and suspense.

007 still scores with the ladies, who are no longer "Bond girls," but women. Dame Judi Dench is back as spy boss M, turning in a steely performance. Ralph Fiennes, Ben Wishaw and Albert Finney add their own star power.

Director Sam Mendes, a series newcomer, skillfully blends 007 tradition with innovation, making viewers fall for Bond all over again.

Extras includes commentaries and multiple featurettes.

PETER HOWELL

Wanda Sykes brings her brand of comedy to Niagara Falls this week. GETTY IMAGES

Honeymoon with Wanda

Coming to Canada. Comedian shares her thoughts on Niagara Falls, champagne bathtubs and Jodie Foster

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Comedian Wanda Sykes brings her standup act to Niagara Falls this week, so we wanted to check in with her about old-fashioned tourist destinations and comparing American and Canadian audiences. She also has some notes for Jodie Foster following Foster's headline-grabbing Golden Globes speech last month.

Is there anything you do to modify your show for Canadian audiences?

Not really. You know, I might not do as much with American politics or something, but mainly it's about the same. I don't really switch it too much. Now my act is so much more about personal life and family and kids and stuff, so I think it's a little more relatable. Canadians like to be made fun of. It's kind of like they expect it, and if you don't make fun of them, then they're like, "Come on." Like they ask for it, it's so funny.

When I think of Niagara Falls, I immediately think of old-fashioned, hokey honeymoons. What's your association with it?

I still think about the people going over it in a barrel. I guess that. But yeah, you think of the hokey honeymoon with the champagne bathtub and the heart-shaped waterbed and stuff like that. But I was told that I would not have any of that in my room. But I just did Leno, and he's played there, and he told me that you can see the Falls right from your room, and it's really fun and nice to look at for about 90 seconds, and then you have to pee. But that might be an old man thing. We'll see if I'll be peeing a lot.

Did you just call Jay Leno an old man?

I will call Jay Leno an old man to his face. He knows that.

You handled your coming out of the closet very gracefully. Did you happen to see Jodie Foster's speech at the Golden Globes?

I did. I was confused. I was really confused, because I was like, "Wait a minute, is she making a speech and taking up all this time really to say that she's not coming out?" I mean, then just don't come out. To me it was more confusing than what she was trying to do. It just didn't work for me, I should just say that.

Naomi puts her best face forward

Model search. One of the world's original supermodels turns to TV to find the visage to represent ULTA Beauty

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Naomi Campbell is heading to TV, joining fellow models Coco Rocha and Karolina Kurkova along with photographer Nigel Barker with the Face, their search for the model who can best represent ULTA Beauty. It's a daunting task, but the 42-year-old Campbell knows what she's looking for.

Reality TV is the new model training ground

"There is no model handbook," Campbell says. "Coming from the '90s, we basically just had to learn as we went along and, of course, I would ask Iman or other models who were around me to show me how to do things. But I think things have changed and now I think a show like this is absolutely needed."

She knows talent

"We're looking for someone who catches your eye, is driven, passionate, can take direction," she says. "It's someone that, you know, walks into the room and takes your breath away. We are looking for a supermodel like ourselves that can be the new Naomi, the new Karolina, the new Coco."

The girls better not take this opportunity for granted

"I was always told in the beginning the big end goal was you work, work, work, work and then you get this big contract at the end, like ULTA Beauty, which is in 500 stores across America," she says. "This is a big deal for someone to win this contract. They instantly become a household name."

It's time for her to give back

"I mean, I've been asked, like, for the last 12 years to do television," Campbell admits. "For me, what was attractive about (the Face was) just the whole thing about mentoring. I've been working for 26 years, and I felt like I do have something that I can share from the business of 26 years under my belt and giving it over to young, hopeful supermodels who want to be in our business today."

Naomi Campbell GETTY IMAGES

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Taylor Swift ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Anger in English: Swift gives Grammys her best British Style

Taylor Swift used her opening slot at the Grammys this weekend to offer a not-so-subtle dig at ex-boyfriend Harry Styles. Before a rousing chorus of We are Never Ever Getting Back Together, Swift offered, "So he calls me up and he's like, 'I still love you,'" copping a British accent in an obvious nod to the One Direction member. "And I'm like, 'I'm sorry, I'm busy opening up the Grammys. And we're never getting back together. Like, ever.'"

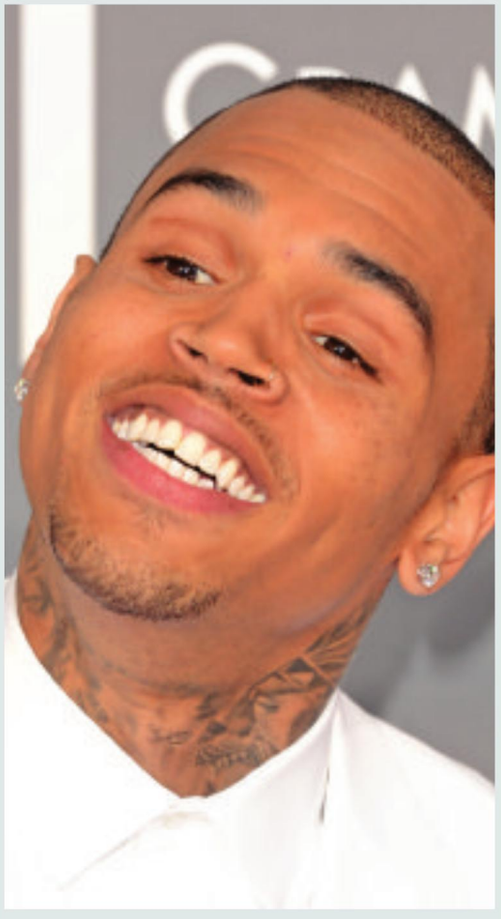
Jessica Chastain

Chastain feels no disdain toward fellow industry females

Jessica Chastain doesn't appreciate the rumours out there that she and fellow Oscar nominee Jennifer Lawrence are feuding.

"I find it very sad that media makes up bogus stories about women fighting in this industry," Chastain writes in a post to her Facebook page. "Why do we support the myth that women are competitive and cannot get along? I think all of the actresses recognized this year have given incredible performances. But more important, they've all shown themselves to be filled with generosity and kindness. I've done two photo shoots with Jennifer Lawrence over the years and have found her to be utterly charming and a great talent."

The Word



Get in on the Grammy gossip

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Sunday night was so big we're still talking about it Tuesday (sorry, Pope).

The drama surrounds Chris Brown, of course, because it always does. Brown, who already rubbed most people the wrong way after he refused to give a standing ovation to Frank Ocean when he won over Brown for best urban contemporary album, partied hard at a Hollywood nightclub with Rihanna. TMZ was there to snap pictures of the two of them smoking what appears to be a joint (shocking!) and leaving the club around three in the morning.

The ratings for the 2013 Grammy Awards were big, but not big enough to top 2012's numbers. Why? No dead pop icon. Last year's record audience was because the awards show was held the day after Whitney Houston's death. But still, this year's music-filled awards show delivered 28.37 million viewers.

Missing from Sunday night's party? Justin Bieber, who sat out the Grammys this year. Instead, the pop star decided instead to do a livestream web chat with fans during the awards ceremony, but technical difficulties scuttled those plans.

"Livestream is over capacity and not letting me in the room. Give me a second," Bieber tweeted, letting his frustration show. "Since nothing is working and I'm super-upset, I feel I gotta make it up to you. I should post a new song on Twitter so you can still be excited."

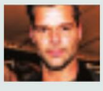
Bieber had decided to forgo the awards show after not receiving a single nomination.

Angelina Jolie

Jolie pops head out of hiding to present film industry honour

Angelina Jolie has kept a fairly low profile lately, sticking around London with her family while she filmed her upcoming Maleficent and Brad Pitt worked on World War Z. But the busy mother of six made a surprise appearance in L.A. this weekend, presenting a lifetime achievement award to cinematographer Dean Semler at the American Society of Cinematographers Awards, according to Us Weekly. Semler shot Jolie's directorial debut, In the Land of Blood and Honey.

Twitter



@ricky_martin
The #Pope resigns? I didn't know that was even possible. Apparently, the last time a pope resigned was the year 1415 #IfYouRintrested

@SarahKSilverman
When I die my only wish will be to have a religion started based on me (like where I'm the star)& also my face on money

@DanaDelaney
Now that gays can marry, the Pope resigns. #metsomeone

@ABFoundation
I will not let the weather defeat me...

The dating food guide

Dr. Dawn Harper, a health expert on the award winning British TV show Embarrassing Bodies, talks us through what we should and shouldn't eat or drink before, during and after a hot date.

ROMINA McGUINNESS
romina.mcguinness@metro.lu

BEFORE

TAKE A PROBIOTIC If you know that you suffer from gas, taking a probiotic (as a supplement or in your yogurt or cereal) will help with your digestion.

BEAT THE BLOAT Constipation causes bloating. Increase the fibre in your diet by eating more fruit and vegetables two to three days before the date.

FILL UP ON H_2O Drink plenty of fluids. A dehydrated mouth is a smelly one.

DON'T DRINK ON AN EMPTY STOMACH But if you're going for dinner, you can't afford to be too full either. Have something small, like a cookie and a glass of milk, to line your stomach.

DURING THE DATE

SKIP THE SPAGHETTI If I were going out to impress, I wouldn't order a pasta-based dish. I've yet to meet somebody who could eat spaghetti easily — it may dribble down your face. Choose something you know you can eat relatively elegantly.

SKIP THE ESPRESSO End the meal with a peppermint tea or a sweet. This will freshen your breath and help ease digestion.

AVOID GASSY FOODS Our body produces around two litres of bowel gas a day ... but you don't want to be burping or breaking wind when you're trying to have a romantic evening, do you? Foods such as beans, pulses, onions, cabbage, sprouts, cauliflower and artichokes increase production of gas. Avoid any awkwardness by removing these foods from your diet for a while.

PACE YOURSELF Eat slowly! It can take 20 minutes for the hormones secreted in your stomach to get the message through to the brain indicating that you're full. If you eat too fast, you may have overdone it by the time your brain goes, "Wait, slow down!" And then you'll be left with that horrible feeling that you've got a brick lodged in your stomach.

WATCH YOUR MOUTH Spicy or garlicky foods can cause bad breath. Be conscious of what your other half is eating and follow suit. Tip: if your dish comes with a parsley garnish, chew on that as it will help get rid of any nasty smells in your mouth.

AFTER

DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T WARN YOU... If you were a complete pig at dinner, then you're probably going to want to lie down, hold your belly and groan. You won't be up for a night of passion.

PRACTISE SAFE SEX ... The nicest people can and do get sexually transmitted diseases. You might be out with Mr. or Ms. Wonderful — but genitals don't know that, and neither do the bugs that party down there. Make sure you use protection — if you're not crippled by stomach cramps from eating too much food, that is.

Close encounters

...and other health issues you might want to be aware of

Teeth. According to Harper, we should all be brushing our teeth twice a day and flossing at least once. Doing so will remove the tiny particles lodged between the teeth, which can become a source of bad breath when broken down by bacteria. You can also use a tongue scraper.

Food hygiene. Avoid buffet style meals, warns Harper: "Food that's been out hanging around at room temperature for a long while is more likely to be contaminated."

Body odor. You sweat, you wash— makes sense, right? Ironically, that's actually the worst thing you could do. "Fresh sweat doesn't smell— pungent BO is the result of sweat being broken down by the bacteria on your skin," says Harper. "This is because the skin is slightly acidic, so when you use a normal perfumed soap, which is slightly alkaline, you're changing the PH of the skin and creating an environment that's better for the bacteria to grow. It's a vicious cycle. The bacteria have had a chance to replicate and proliferate and now there are more of them breaking the sweat down, making the smell worse. Use PH balanced soap to slow down the production of bacteria."

Anderson family vision care
OPTOMETRISTS:
Dr. A. Anderson & Associates

BOGO
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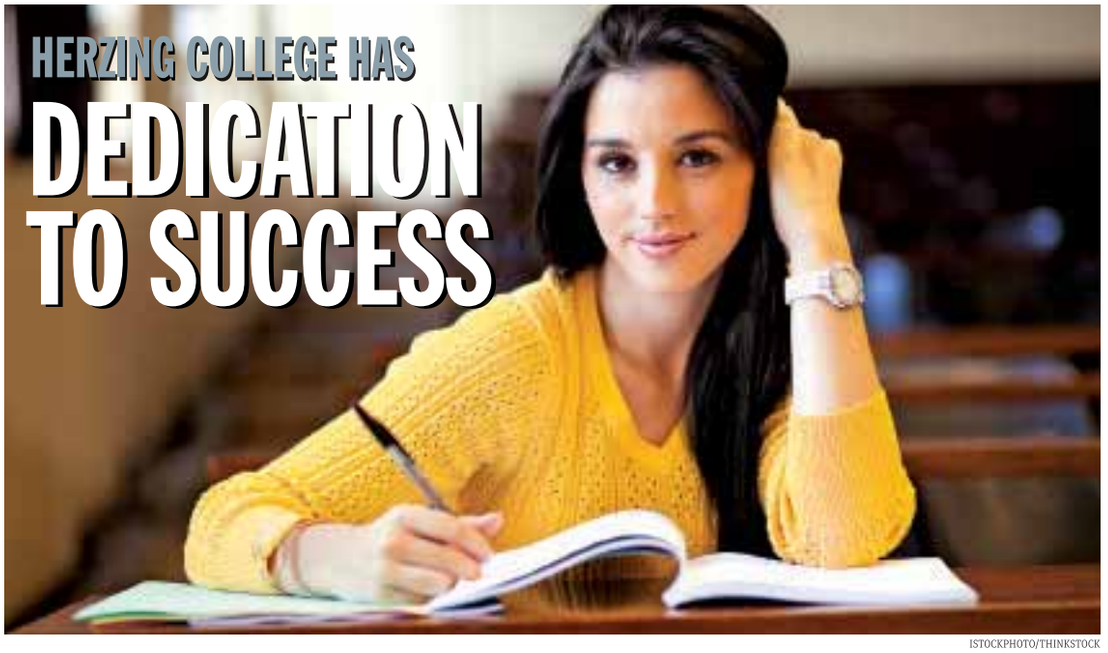

HERZING COLLEGE HAS DEDICATION TO SUCCESS

ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

If you had friends interested in the types of programs offered at Herzing College, would you recommend the college to them? This question was posed to Herzing students this past fall — and more than 99 per cent of them said "yes."

"Results like these are only possible when our students see value — and feel valued — every day," says Bill Riches, college president. "The credit must go to our talented instructors and staff here at Herzing College. They believe in what we do and why we do it."

Since 1970, Herzing has prepared thousands of students for careers in health care, business, technology, and law. From year to year, even generation to generation, Herzing provides a consistent quality of education.

"We have an extremely low staff turnover," Riches says. "Meaning, if you graduate from one of our programs, then recommend it to family members or friends, the same instructors who were there for you will be there for them."

Building this successful relationship with students also means ensuring their education is affordable. If your finances are preventing you from pursuing the training you need, Herzing College may be able to help. Your options may include student loans, grants, or government assistance. Herzing admissions advisers can help you identify the solution that is best for you, free of charge.

Should you start to struggle with your studies, Herzing will help with that, too, arranging free, one-on-one tutoring, and self-paced remedial courses in math, English and science.

Herzing College programs are designed to teach you the skills for which employers are looking. They are led by instructors with industry experience — and supported by career services specialists who maintain strong ties between Herzing and internship hosts and employers. All Herzing programs are driven by advisory boards made up of industry experts and employers.

This dedication to success explains why Herzing College has such a low student dropout rate. For Riches, that's really the whole point.

"We will educate you and work with you until you're employed in your field of study," he says. "And five or 10 years from now, if you're looking for a new career once again, we'll still be there to help. Your relationship with Herzing College is ongoing — for as long as you need it."

Herzing College is located at 723 Portage Ave. For more information, call 204-775-8175, or email info@wpg.herzing.edu. You can also visit the college's website at herzing.ca/winnipeg.

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LAW AND ORDER

ROBERTSON CAN TRAIN YOU TO ENTER THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The justice system needs smart, hard-working individuals to keep it running smoothly. In other words, it needs you. In less than a year, Robertson College can train you to be a legal assistant — and help you turn those valuable skills into the career for which you have been looking.

Legal assistants, such as legal secretaries, receptionists, and office administrators, provide crucial support to any legal team. Employed by law firms, corporations, and legal departments, their tasks include preparation of legal documents, transcription, filing, record-keeping, and research.

Robertson College's seven-month legal assistant program teaches you all

ROBERTSON COLLEGE PHOTO

these skills. Instructors take a hands-on approach to education, supported by small class sizes that offer you plenty of opportunity to ask questions and engage in discussion.

The program concludes with a four-week practicum, providing you with the kind of real-world experience you cannot learn in a classroom. Following that, and with the college's help, you will pursue your new career. Robertson College's post-graduate legal assistant employment rate is 83 per cent.

New classes for the legal assistant program begin almost every month. You can register for one any day of the week. To learn more, simply arrange a one-on-one consultation with a Robertson College career counsellor. Consults are available during regular hours, Monday through Friday. You can schedule one by calling the Robertson College direct line at 204-943-5661, or by filling out the online form at robertsoncollege.com.

KEEP PACE WITH GROWING SOCIAL MEDIA DEMAND

Social media is viral by nature — and that means consumer preferences are shaping our products, services and entertainment more than ever. As organizations vie for ever greater market share, the demand for public relations and marketing professionals has exponentially increased. According to Forbes.com, social media jobs are "clearly the winner" among top technology job trends for 2012.

If you are interested in this high-growth industry consider the full-time public relations marketing management program, offered through Professional, Applied and Continuing Education (PACE) at the University of Winnipeg.

Graduates of this program possess two diplomas: One in public relations, the other in marketing management, plus a management certificate; providing them with multiple pathways to job opportunities. The added focus on management helps them fast-track to managerial roles.

"Students value the program's compressed, one-year format, which allows them to jump back into the workforce quickly," says Colleen Little, program manager. "They also appreciate our holistic approach to the curriculum. While

CONTRIBUTED

the program does include all traditional public relations and marketing elements, and is aligned with all professional certification knowledge requirements, it also incorporates emerging industry trends."

New classes for this program will begin in September. For more, contact Mekala Wickramasinghe at me.wickramasinghe@uwinnipeg.ca, or 204-982-1143. You can also visit the full-time program page at pace.uwinnipegcourses.ca.

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FLEXIBLE CAREER OPTIONS

WITH WELLINGTON

WELLINGTON COLLEGE PHOTOS

Therapeutic massage requires more than a great pair of hands. Practitioners must also listen to their clients — determining their strengths and weaknesses, and how best to move forward. It's a philosophy that Wellington College, one of the oldest schools for massage in Canada, applies to teaching, too.

Wellington College adapts to students' needs. It offers both a two-year, remedial massage therapy program, and a three-year, part-time program for adults, incorporating distance learning. Elective courses allow students to specialize in sport, spa, or medical therapy. Whether recent high school graduates, or veterans of the workforce with full-time jobs and family commitments, students can find a program that suits their schedules and their goals.

"Our graduates can take their careers in several directions," says Randy Ellingson, president, Wellington College. "Many choose to work in established massage therapy, chiropractic, or physiotherapy clinics. Some start clinics of their own. After a few years in the field, some will further their education by studying osteopathy."

INFO SESSION

Wellington College will hold its next information session on Feb. 24, from 1-3 p.m. This is your chance to find about more about Wellington's massage programs and how they can benefit you. To sign up, phone 888-957-2402.

Classes average only 20 to 25 students, meaning each student can expect a lot of guidance and feedback from instructors. At Wellington, the instructors know students by name — and should a student be struggling, the problem will be identified and addressed quickly. Wellington College's student support system also includes counselling services, study halls, and tutorial services, all free of charge.

"Our students often tell us that their favourite part of studying here is the hands-on training opportunities," Ellingson says. "This training, which accounts for more than 50 per cent of the total coursework, includes outreach programs and work in our student clinic, where, under instructor supervision, students provide massage services for the public.

"At the conclusion of the program, they complete a three-week practicum, on-site, at a place of business. These experiences give our students real-world experience before their studies are even finished."

To learn more about the opportunities awaiting you at Wellington College, request a free information package through wellingtoncollege.com, or phone 888-957-2402.

Open House

Tuesday, February 19, 2013
12pm - 3pm | 5pm - 8pm
Notre Dame Campus & Exchange District Campus

Wednesday, February 20, 2013
9am - 2pm Notre Dame Campus & Exchange District Campus

Enter to win great prizes! Grand Prize is a $500 tuition credit!
Discover how Red River College can help you shape your future!

At the Red River College Open House, students can:

- Tour the Notre Dame Campus, Exchange District Campus, and Stevenson Campus. (Free shuttle service provided.)
- Meet with instructors, grads and academic advisors.
- Tour the new Paterson Global Foods Institute, home of RRC's School of Hospitality and Culinary Arts, as well as its very first student residence!

rrc.ca/openhouse

RED RIVER COLLEGE

DIFFERENT SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

PATAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL SEES THE POTENTIAL IN ALL

PATAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL PHOTO

Patal Vocational School has been providing courses and programs in high demand fields for more than 28 years. Patal has seen students start their own businesses, become managers, and build their personal portfolio to fit in any market that is in demand.

Patal recognizes the potential in all people —whether you are 18 or 65 with barriers to employment or limited skills. Achieving success for you is Patal's goal. Small classes and supportive atmosphere means the school's students get the attention they deserve.

In today's job market having an education is very valuable to employers, but having the confidence in yourself is what they will see and appreciate.

Patal is recognized for culinary arts and hospitality training. The school has formed a partnership with Siloam Mission and trains its students in culinary arts at the Madison Lodge. The little school that cares has been offering culinary arts at the Madison Lodge for 1½ years and has seen the relationships between students and the residents form a community that the residents and students both appreciate.

Under the guidance of Red Seal chef Steven Watson, the students have created meals that some residents of the Madison Lodge would have never tried because of the barriers they faced in the streets.

Patal also offers a 12-month PC service technician/network management program that provides the preparation to challenge A+ Certification, Network Plus, and Microsoft Office suite.

Patal's focus is hands-on experience, working within the community by recycling, refurbishing and repairing computers that are donated to students, community organizations and those that will benefit by having access to technology.

For more, see patalvoc.com.

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- Student laptop program
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RED RIVER COLLEGE PHOTOS

RED RIVER OPENS ITS DOORS

New courses, new programs, even new buildings — a lot is happening at Red River College these days. Learn all about it by attending RRC's 2013 open house.

Based out of the college's North Gym, on its Notre Dame Campus, the open house will feature more than 60 booths, representing more than 110 full-time and fast-track programs, plus a variety of courses. Among them, the programming for mobile devices course, which introduces students to the Objective-C programming language used to develop applications for iOS systems like the iPhone, iPad, and Mac. You can also learn about this course by visiting rrc.ca/mobile.

For those interested in learning how to raise money efficiently and effectively, RRC offers the fundamentals of fundraising. Whether you are running a small organization or a large one, the knowledge you will gain from this five-week series of workshops will prove valuable.

Red River College is also conducting a range of culinary seminars this spring, to be held at its new facility, the Paterson Global Foods Institute. Offered through the School of Continuing Education during evenings and weekends, these innovative specialty courses and workshops are suitable for both professionals and enthusiasts. The wine and spirit appreciation and education series of seminars, offered in partnership with the Banville and Jones Wine Company and the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission (MLCC), includes advanced food and wine — chefs and food lovers; aperitif to dessert — wine enthusiasts; champagne and sparkling; north, south, east, west — wine enthusiast; sophisticated flavours of brandy; and taking it on the gin. Each seminar is two to three hours long.

Culinary workshops and courses still to come include: Advanced chocolate work; basic sugar work; and celiac pastries. For more information, or to join RRC's mailing list, visit rrc.ca/coned.

Notre Dame Campus will also be open for tours during the open house. Guided by a student ambassador, you will visit classrooms, laboratories, and other academic workspaces, attend demonstrations, and see first-hand the amenities the campus offers. If the program that interests you most is taught on another campus, don't worry, a free shuttle bus can take you to the Stevenson and Exchange District campuses, too. Instructors will be on-hand to answer your questions, and academic advisers will be there, too, should you wish to take the next step.

Red River College's Open House is scheduled to take place Feb. 19, from noon to 3 p.m., and 5-8 p.m.; and Feb. 20, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

To learn more, visit rrc.ca/openhouse.

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IS WINNIPEG TECH RIGHT FOR YOU?

FIND OUT AT AN OPEN HOUSE FEB. 28

Winnipeg Technical College may have a certificate or diploma program perfect for you. Be part of the college's next open house and you can find out.

WTC's open house will take place Feb. 28, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., at the college's new Fultz Campus. It will feature tours of the campus, running at regular intervals throughout the day. During your tour, you will have the chance to visit classrooms and labs, experience the campus' amenities, and participate in program-specific demonstrations. It will be a hands-on experience, designed to give you a sense of student life at WTC — both inside and outside the classroom.

It is also your chance to ask questions of instructors and staff, many of whom will be on-site. Perhaps you have decided on WTC, but not yet on a particular program? Maybe you have chosen a program, but want to know more about what the class dynamic is like, and if you will fit in? Maybe you just want guidance on the career opportunities available to you?

WINNIPEG TECHNICAL COLLEGE PHOTOS

These are the types of answers you can get at the WTC open house.

The open house is also a good opportunity to learn about new programs being offered by WTC. Its hotel and hospitality services certificate program, for example, remains one of the few of its kind offered in the Winnipeg area. Providing students with knowledge and skills needed to join the Canadian tourism sector, the program's curriculum meets industry standards recognized around the world. You can also find out about the college's new four-month, paid co-op program for auto mechanics. And that's not all.

"We're looking forward to unveiling brand new diploma programs at the open house, delivered in partnership with the University of Manitoba," says Veronica Neufeld, marketing and communications specialist at WTC. "We're also expanding our partnership programs with the University of Winnipeg. This is an exciting period of growth at WTC — a time of new partnerships, programs, and program areas."

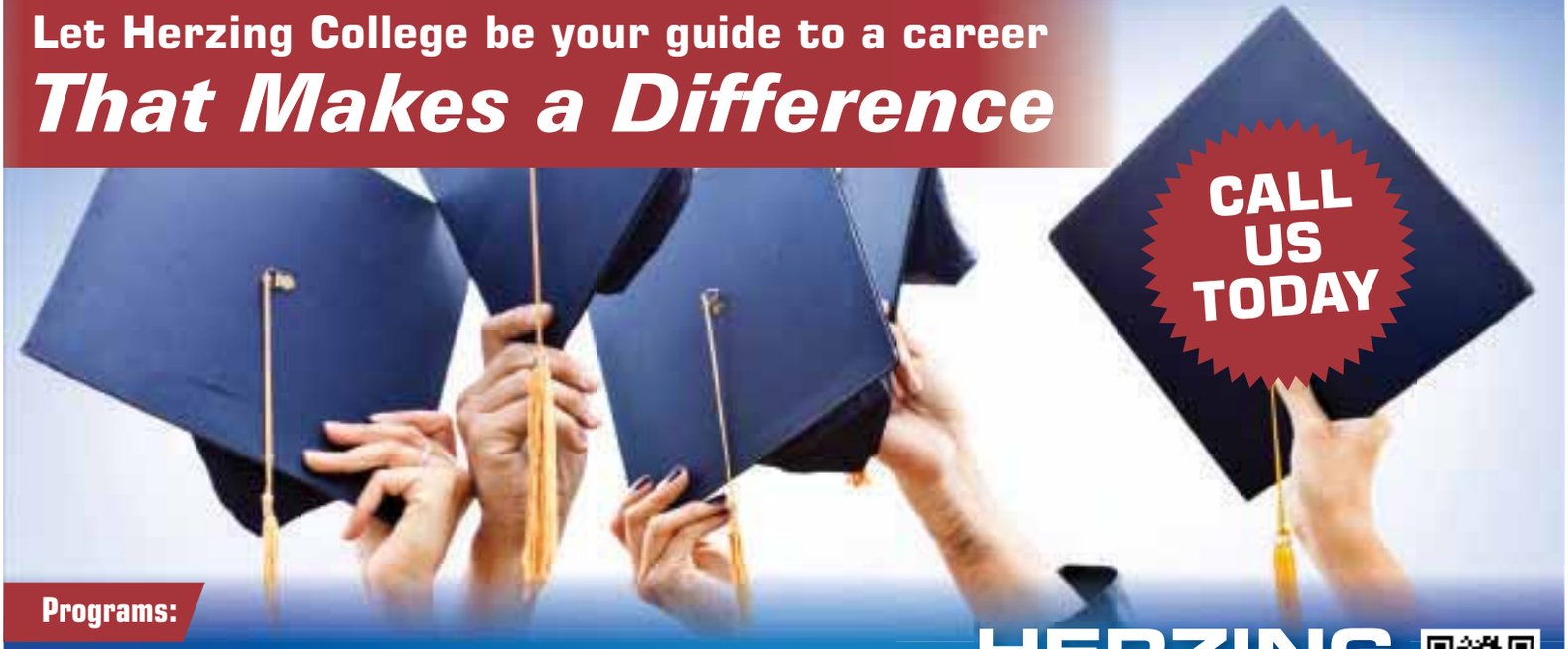
To learn more about the open house, and about Winnipeg Technical College, visit wtc.mb.ca, or phone 204-989-6500.

SPOTS ARE OPEN

You are only a certificate or diploma away from a new career. So why wait? Winnipeg Technical College still has space available in several programs, including these five, each starting in September: Hotel and hospitality services; hairstyling; network systems administration; motosport technician; and carpentry. Application forms for these programs are available online at wtc.mb.ca.

Let Herzing College be your guide to a career

That Makes a Difference



Programs:

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Fat Tuesday slims down with Red Beans and Rice Soup

With Mardi Gras upon us, turn the classic Red Beans and Rice dish into a hearty (and healthy) soup fit for a Mardi Gras party.

All it takes to transform the standard Red Beans and Rice into soup is the addition of celery, onion and green bell peppers (often called the "Holy Trinity" of New Orleans cuisine), a little Creole seasoning, some chicken stock, and andouille sausage.

By the way, this soup is even better a few days later, and it freezes well.

This recipe serves eight. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1. In saucepan over medium, heat oil. Add sausage and cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned, 5 minutes. Use slotted spoon to transfer to a bowl.

2. Add onion to saucepan and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, 5 minutes. Add garlic and Creole seasoning and cook, stirring, 1 minute.

3. While onion and garlic are cooking, mash 1 cup of kidney beans with fork, then add them to saucepan. Add celery, pepper, remaining whole beans, chicken broth and bay leaf. Bring mix to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

4. Stir in reserved sausage and the cooked rice. Cook until heated through. Discard the bay leaf before serving.

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 9 oz (3 links) turkey or chicken andouille sausage, diced into 1/2-inch chunks
- 2 cups medium chopped yellow onion
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp Creole seasoning (purchased or use the recipe below)
- Two 15 1/2 -oz cans low-sodium red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 1/2 cups chopped green or red bell pepper
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 Turkish bay leaf
- 1 1/2 cups cooked brown rice (1/2 cup uncooked produces 1 1/2 cups cooked)

Creole Seasoning

- 1 tbsp plus 1 teaspoon hot paprika
- 1 tbsp garlic powder
- 1 1/2 tsp each onion powder, cayenne, dried oregano, dried thyme
- 1 tsp each ground black pepper, kosher salt

Creole Seasoning

1. In a small bowl combine all ingredients. Store in airtight container for up to 6 months.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/SARA MOULTON, AUTHOR OF SARA MOULTON'S EVERYDAY FAMILY DINNERS.

Banana Bourbon Bread Pudding: Mardi Gras' sweet side

Bananas Foster and bread pudding are two of the most popular desserts in New Orleans.

So in honour of the over-the-top nature of Mardi Gras, this more-is-better approach combines them into one.

Top a simple baked banana-pecan bread pudding with a classic hard sauce — including a healthy dose of bourbon, of course — which becomes a gooey icing that melts into the dessert and hardens as it cools.

If that's not your style, top the treat with a scoop of butter pecan ice cream.

This recipe serves 16. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

For the bread pudding:

- 1 loaf (about 14 oz) banana bread, cubed
- 4 cups (8 oz) cubed French or Italian bread
- 2 very ripe bananas, mashed
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 cups milk, hot
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp ground allspice
- 1/2 cup pecans, toasted and chopped

For the bourbon hard sauce:

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 2 cups powdered sugar, sifted
- 1/4 cup Bourbon

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Coat 9-by-13-inch baking pan with cooking spray.

2. On rimmed baking sheet, arrange cubed banana and French or Italian breads in even layer. Bake 15 minutes, or until lightly toasted. Set aside.

3. In bowl, whisk mashed bananas, eggs and sugar. While whisking, pour in the hot milk, then add vanilla and allspice. Gently mix in toasted bread cubes and pecans, then spoon mix into prepared pan. Bake until puffed and cooked through, about 30 minutes.

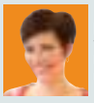
4. Meanwhile, prepare sauce. In bowl, use an electric mixer to beat the butter until smooth and soft. Add the powdered sugar and beat until well incorporated. Add the bourbon and stir until smooth. Set aside.

5. When the bread pudding has finished baking, dollop the hard sauce over the surface, spreading it as necessary to allow it to melt evenly over the surface. Serve the bread pudding warm.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Health Solutions

Chocolate outside of the box



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

My funny valentine, you are going to have to think outside the box this year in your love purchase.

There are ways to show your affection without all that sugar and fat. And I promise, it will feel just as sweet.

Here are three ideas:

Cocoa nibs in a grinder

Nibs are bits of the whole cocoa fruit before all the processing, which means that they retain their full antioxidant power. A beautiful grinder that sits next to the pepper mill will remind me all year not only to use the nibs on everything as I do pepper, but also that you thought of me deeply.

Whip up a Mexican Hot cocoa mix

Organic cocoa powder, skim milk powder, organic cane sugar, cinnamon, pinch of chili pepper. A couple of spoons of this in a cup of boiling water and all I will be able to think about is spooning.

At least 70 per cent cocoa, please

If you are going to buy me straight up, good old chocolate, make it the finest, organic, fair trade dark stuff that has at least 70 per cent cocoa. We may as well love the rest of the world as much as we love each other.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

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HEART-HEALTHY ACTIONS

HOW TO KEEP THIS MIRACULOUS MUSCLE IN TIP-TOP SHAPE

Everyone knows Valentine's Day is about sharing the love in your heart with others. But how much do we know about the health of our own heart? Too often we take the 24-7 beat, beat, beat for granted, starting our days without giving it a second thought.

Did you know that during an average lifetime, the human heart will beat more than 2.5 billion times? And the average heart beats about 100,000 times each day and pumps about 7,200 litres (1,900 gallons) of blood? It is miraculous when you think about it.

So, for a muscle that works as hard as it does, be sure to ask what can you can do to support its health.

"Since the heart has our attention this month, the Canadian Health Food Association (CHFA) encourages everyone to consider some simple actions that promote a healthy lifestyle and benefit heart health," says CHFA president Helen Sherrard.

Here is a snapshot:

INDULGING IN CHOCOLATE? — MAKE IT DARK: Scientific studies have shown that cocoa, found in dark chocolate, is a good source of flavonols, which have antioxidant activity to help cells resist damage. Research has indicated that consumption of dark chocolate can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.

MANAGE STRESS LEVELS: Health professionals recognize that stress carries negative health consequences, one of which being heart disease. In 2010, Statistics Canada found that 23.5 per cent of Canadians aged 15 and older reported that most days were "extremely or quite a bit stressful." Consider taking a holistic approach to stress management, consult your health-care provider and research the benefits of magnesium citrate, an anti-stress mineral and valerian, an anti-anxiety herb. Both are safe, effective natural health products found at natural health food stores.

USE TOMATOES IN YOUR ROMANTIC VALENTINE'S DINNER: They are an excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin A, potassium, and fibre and are high in lycopene. The combination of nutrients in tomatoes has been shown to help prevent cardiovascular disease.

– News Canada

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TRAINING TO SAVE LIVES

WITH ST. JOHN AMBULANCE MANITOBA COURSES

For Brent Fowler, it's quite simple.

"The more people that complete training, the more likely it is that someone will act quickly when someone else has a heart attack," he says. "With a few hours of training, anyone can learn how to save a life."

After 20 years as an emergency medical responder, Fowler joined St. John Ambulance Manitoba eight years ago and is now director of training and operations.

"In emergencies, the first few minutes are crucial," he says. "After someone has a heart attack, for instance, the chance of survival is 70 to 90 per cent if a defibrillator is used within three to five minutes. For every minute after that, it drops by about 10 per cent."

St. John Ambulance Manitoba delivers training in first aid, CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) and AED (automated external defibrillation) to approximately 30,000 people each year. Courses are available in a variety of options (such as first aid alone or with CPR) seven days a week and 360 days a year.

"Many people don't want to accept that the symptoms they're feeling indicate a life-threatening problem," Fowler says. "They attribute it to indigestion, for instance. It's sad, but many people die of heart attacks because they fail to ask for help."

ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

Given this reality, much of the training focuses on recognizing the symptoms of a heart attack and on taking charge of the situation.

"CPR itself is not terribly complicated," Fowler says. "And AED units are really simple to operate. For most people, it's a matter of learning to turn their initial fear into the energy needed to react quickly."

POWER OF RED PALM OIL

CONTRIBUTED

Red palm oil is one of the most potent natural whole food oils known. Derived from the kernel of a special kind of palm tree indigenous to Africa, this oil has been used as a food and medicine for centuries. One of the healthiest vegetable oils available, red palm oil is a versatile cooking oil, since it doesn't oxidize readily when used under low or medium-low heat.

Thus, a raw red palm and coconut oil combination has the additional property of retaining the nutritional value during cooking. It is also an ideal oil for food enhancement, such as fortifying the nutritional density of baked goods and also adding to smoothies.

Red palm oil is one of the richest natural sources of vitamin E.

In one recent study, published in the journal Nutrients, it was found that red palm oil-derived nutrients had an impressive action on the heart muscle. In the study, consumption of this oil resulted in improved pumping power of the heart muscle, plus an incredible benefit of reduced heart muscle stiffness. Additionally, blood pressure was reduced in this animal study, while liver function improved. Also, studies conducted at the Universities of Wisconsin and Louisiana have revealed the following key benefits:

- Decrease in the rate of arteriosclerosis, a disease in which the arteries harden and typically damage the heart.
- Reduction of blood cholesterol
- Improvement in the clotting function of blood. In other words, the reduction in the stickiness of the blood, which is necessary in the prevention of strokes and heart attacks.

– Dr. Cass Ingram

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Think about doing something hot for Valentine's Day: save your dough

FUN AND FRUGAL
Lesley Scorgie
money@metronews.ca

According to a variety of recent bank surveys, the average couple spends between $200 and $400 to celebrate Valentine's Day. The majority of those costs are borne by men.

If you're like most North Americans, still feeling the pinch of credit card bills from December's holiday season, don't blow out your budget on Feb. 14. Treat your valentine to a low-cost and meaningful experience.

Try these ideas to celebrate.

In this crazy, busy age we live in, quality time with your partner is special. So block off your calendar on Feb. 14 and commit to celebrate it together. On your special day, remove interruptions such as cellphones and computers.

Rather than going out for an expensive dinner, have dessert and coffee at a local café instead. Alternatively, make dinner at home. No, you don't need to be Jamie Oliver to cook a great meal. Download a recipe and follow the steps with fresh ingredients. Plus, if you plan your menu around what's on sale at your local grocer, you could save a bundle.

After your romantic home cooked meal (add candlelight for romantic ambiance), download a movie from Netflix or rent a classic film for free from the library. Alternatively, read to each other by a fire or bundle up and go for a stroll outside.

Ditch traditional flowers and buy your love a plant that blooms with flowers year round. Skip the card exchange and write each other love notes instead.

Stumped for words? Simply write what you love about your partner.

If you decide to purchase a gift, hunt around for coupons or buy an on-sale experience you can enjoy together at a less expensive time of year. Alternatively, make a homemade gift by baking, design a scavenger hunt with chocolates, or offer IOU gift certificates to share various household duties.

Remember that when times are lean, many couples choose to spend no money at all. Instead they give the gift of quality time.

If you think it's uncool to be frugal on Valentine's Day, think again. The fastest relationship killer is financial stress. So, why overspend when it could jeopardize the health of your relationship?

Follow Lesley on Twitter @LesleyScorgie

The fastest relationship killer is financial stress. So think frugal this year. ISTOCK IMAGES

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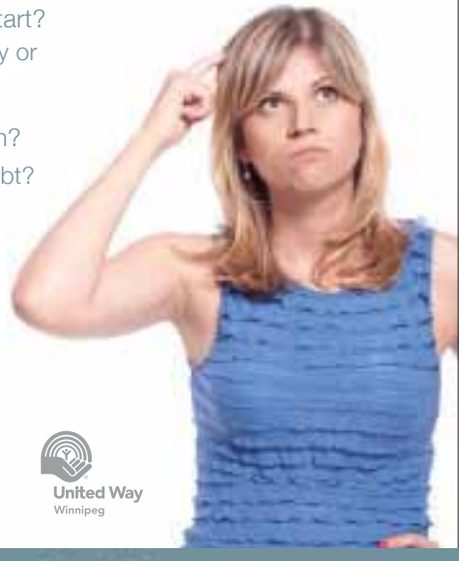

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metro
RRSP GUIDE
Tuesday, February 12, 2013

A lump sum RRSP loan can help reduce your gross income, which reduces the amount of taxes you owe. COMSTOCK IMAGES/THINKSTOCK

When is a loan right for you?

YLVA VAN BUUREN
For Metro

It's a common scenario at tax time — the accountant preparing your personal tax return calls to say that you owe money ... and you should buy RRSPs to reduce the tax bill. If extra funds are not available, should you rush out and get a loan?

"Unfortunately, most people make RRSP loan decisions on the spur of the moment," says Stephanie Holmes-Winton, CEO, The Money Finder, Halifax, and a member of Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada. "And it should really be a thought-out part of their financial plan."

Reducing your tax bill is one of the reasons why many people buy RRSPs — and that makes sense, says Anthony Williams, Canadian Institute of Financial Planning, vice-president of academic affairs. A lump sum RRSP loan will help reduce your gross income, which reduces the amount of taxes you owe.

At the same time, putting a lump sum amount in all at once allows your money to grow more over time, Williams said, because it's in there longer — compared to if you put in the same amount but made monthly contributions.

Another reason people take a large sum RRSP loan is because it may trigger a tax refund, but that can work against you, too, if you aren't careful.

Here are three scenarios where you might want to reconsider an RRSP loan:

You aren't a disciplined money manager

"Borrowing money to get a tax refund and then spending that refund on 'whatever' is not recommended," Holmes-Winton said. "You end up paying the loan back with after-tax dollars plus interest."

It's better to apply the refund cheque to the RRSP loan and lower the principal. Some banks structure RRSP loans so the first payment won't apply until after you get the tax refund.

The new monthly payment will not be manageable

A loan means there is a debt obligation and you will have to have the cash flow to make the monthly payment. Some people have to supplement their income, Holmes-Winton said, by using credit cards and lines of credit and they end up in worse shape.

The loan costs more than you think

Sometimes there are payment free periods of time, but extra interest costs or administrative fees. Always read the fine print, and don't rush into anything.

Contributions.

Program allows you to upgrade your education

MICHELLE WILLIAMS
For Metro

A new government program is making education upgrading easier for Canadians. ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

In recent years, the number of Canadians of all ages starting over in new careers has hit an all-time high. Maybe you have always wanted to explore new opportunities — or perhaps you have been caught in your company's downsizing and you need to establish yourself in a new vocation. The quandary is how to support yourself and your family while you retrain.

"A new government program is making education upgrading easier for Canadians," explains Serena Cheng, director of Wealth Management and investment adviser with Richardson GMP in Toronto. "The Lifelong Learning Plan allows you to use your RRSP contributions to pay for training for you or your spouse."

The Lifelong Learning Plan (LLP) allows you to take out up to $10,000 annually from your RRSPs to a total of $20,000 in more than a four-year period for you or your spouse, but not for your children's education. The best part — you will continue to be sheltered from paying taxes on the withdrawal. You will have to repay your RRSP over a 10-year period; any funds not repaid after the 10-year deadline will count as income and be taxed.

To participate in the program, there are conditions to meet. While you can use the funds to pay any expenses, you must be registered full time (disabled individuals may be registered part time) in a qualifying program at an approved educational institution. You must reside in Canada and complete your program before 71 years of age.

Participation in the LLP program is available as many times as you want over your lifetime, provided you pay back your RRSP contribution before you apply for a new program. Typically, repayments must start in the fifth year after the first withdrawal to avoid tax penalties.

"This plan is a great incentive to get retrained if you are starting over in a new career, but you want to make sure you see yourself moving into the particular field you're training for before you decide to dissolve your assets," Cheng said. "It would be a shame to lose out on the deferred growth of your RRSP and discover part way through the program that this isn't the field for you."

For more information on the Lifelong Learning Plan and more ways to use RRSP contributions to train for a new career, contact a certified financial planner or your local financial institution.

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Pool your savings with a spousal RRSP

When one person in a married or common-law couple has a much higher income than the other, it's a great idea to open a spousal RRSP, especially if you intend to retire before age 65, says Dean Owen, a personal financial adviser in Saskatoon and past chair of ADVOCIS, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada.

A spousal RRSP allows a couple to build up the pool of savings for the person with the lower income so that at retirement there are equal amounts of RRSPs.

"Basically, it's a smart tax move with the intention of income splitting," says Anthony Williams, vice-president of academic affairs, Canadian Institute of Financial Planning. "You're shifting income from the higher income earning spouse to the lower income earning spouse with the objective of reducing the accumulative family tax bill."

How does it work? The spouse with the higher income opens — and contributes to — a spousal RRSP in the partner's name. How much the contributor puts into the RRSP depends on what their contribution limit is that year. If it's $20,000, for example, they can put the entire amount into their own RRSP, they can put the entire amount into the spousal RRSP, or they can split the amount between the two plans. But they can't go over the limit, Owen said.

While the contributor gets the tax deduction today, "the idea is to even out your retirement savings so you can keep the taxes you pay when you are retired as low as possible," Owen said. Instead of withdrawing $60,000 from one person's fund, for example, each person withdraws $30,000 and is taxed at a lower tax bracket.

One caveat is that funds must not be withdrawn for at least three years. If they are withdrawn, the money is attributed back to the contributor who pays the tax bill. When withdrawal occurs after this attribution period, the tax is paid by the owner.

YLVA VAN BUUREN

RRSPs can be a good way to finance a home purchase. ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

Homebuyers can take advantage of new plan

MICHELLE WILLIAMS
For Metro

Your dream home just posted a "For Sale" sign — but your assets are tied up in RRSPs. Do you let this opportunity pass you by?

"Not at all," says Serena Cheng, director of Wealth Management and investment adviser with Richardson GMP in Toronto. "RRSPs can be a great way to finance a home purchase. If you're a first-time buyer, take advantage of your RRSP investments to buy a home with the federal Home Buyer's Plan."

Home Buyer's Plan (HBP) is a government program that allows first-time buyers to withdraw as much as $25,000 from RRSP contributions to buy or build a home for themselves or a related disabled person. "The biggest benefits are that you don't have to pay taxes on this amount, and you have 15 years to pay it back to your RRSP fund," Cheng said. "And if you are purchasing the home with your spouse or partner, you can each withdraw $25,000."

One firm condition is that payments to reimburse your account must be at least 1/15th of the amount each year. If you can't repay annually, you must pay tax on the amount. Among the other conditions: You must reside in Canada and purchase your home in Canada; the home must be your primary residence; you must be a first-time buyer or have not owned your principal residence for a period of at least five years; and you must be participating in this plan for the first time.

"The HBP is a good way to get your hands on cash for a down payment, but one disadvantage is that you do lose out on the deferred growth of the RRSP," Cheng said. "You also have to be committed to paying it back on schedule to protect yourself against tax penalties.

For more information on the Home Buyer's Plan and more ways to use RRSP contributions to purchase your home, contact a certified financial planner or your local financial institution.

Pitfalls investors should avoid

TALBOT BOGGS
Smart Investing

While the registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) is a great vehicle to help Canadians save for their retirement, there are some pitfalls that investors may not know about and should try to avoid.

Many people, for example, confuse their contribution limit with the deduction limit.

The deduction limit is set at 18 per cent of your previous year's earned income, up to a dollar limit, which changes every year. The maximum dollar limit for the 2012 tax year is $22,970, up from $22,450 in 2011, and will rise to $23,820 in 2013. It is contained in the notice of assessment that you get each year from the Canada Revenue Agency after you have filed your return.

Another pitfall can be saving too much in your RRSP and having too many accounts. An RRSP of between $700,000 and $2 million, for example, may sound great, but that money will be taxed at some point. A retiree with such a large plan would be in the 46 per cent tax bracket and would have their Old Age Security (OAS) clawed back.

Try not to make the same mistakes other investors make when it comes to RRSPs. FIONLINE/THINKSTOCK

Having your financial assets spread over several plans can lead to a disorganized investment strategy, duplication, inappropriate asset allocation and paying more fees than if all investments were consolidated in one account.

Waiting to the last minute to make your contribution is another common pitfall. It can lead to making emotional decisions or parking the money for too long on the sidelines. By contributing early or making regular contributions during the year you get the tax-sheltered returns starting sooner and get the advantages of dollar cost averaging.

Many people also may be investing in the wrong things in their RRSP. As a general rule, it's better to invest in fixed income in your RRSP and equities outside of your RRSP in a non-registered account.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Winnipeg Jets defenceman Zach Bogosian is close to returning to the lineup. The blue-liner had off-season wrist surgery and took full part in practice Monday.
GETTY IMAGES FILE

Buff will take flight, Bogosian grounded

NHL. Jets' top defencemen participate in practice, while goalie Pavelec remains a question mark

It looks like the Winnipeg Jets will be able to count high-scoring defenceman Dustin Byfuglien among the able-bodied as early as Tuesday's game against the Philadelphia Flyers.

"Byfuglien looks like a player for the game," coach Claude Noel said Monday.

But the team's other absent defenceman, Zach Bogosian, is more of a question mark.

"Bogosian probably needs to practise a little bit," Noel said. "As I said before we want to put him (in) a position where he has a chance to succeed."

Bogosian, who had off-season wrist surgery and hasn't played a game since this lockout-shortened season began, took full part in practice Monday and said he was feeling good.

"You can't really be game ready until you're actually in the game but I've had a couple of good practices with the guys and a few bumps in the corner and stuff like that and I haven't had any issues," he said.

"Hopefully it's turned the corner a little bit and hopefully I'm back soon."

The insurance policy

The Jets didn't suffer from Pavelec's absence. Backup Al Montoya recorded a shutout and his second win in his second start this season in beating Ottawa 1-0 on Saturday.

Byfuglien was the No. 2-scoring defenceman in the NHL last season but he has missed the last five games with an undisclosed injury he sustained on a road trip to Florida.

Noel says they've missed his offensive talents as well as his size in the defensive zone. At six-foot-five and 265 pounds he can be very effective at stopping the puck and getting it moved out.

Goaltender Ondrej Pavelec also remains a question mark, after missing the Jets' last game in Ottawa with a flu-like illness.

He says he feels better but wouldn't say he was 100 per cent after eating for the first time since he fell ill.

"I'm ready to go," he said. "The last two days I had two practices. I feel better now. I finally ate something yesterday ... It's the coach's decision."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Olympics

1 sport on block for 2020 Games

IOC leaders are meeting this week to decide which sport to drop from the Olympic program and how to deal with the fallout from the Lance Armstrong doping scandal.

At a two-day IOC executive board meeting opening Tuesday, the IOC will also review preparations for the Winter Olympics in Sochi — less than a year away — and the 2016 Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro, and select a short list of finalists for the 2018 Youth Olympics.

Modern pentathlon, a tradition-steeped contest invented by the founder of the modern Olympics, is expected to face close scrutiny when the board considers which of the current 26 summer Olympic sports to remove from the program of the 2020 Games. Taking out one sport will make way for a new one to be added later this year.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

No punishment for Grabovski

The NHL will not suspend Toronto Maple Leafs forward Mikhail Grabovski for an alleged biting incident in Saturday's game against Montreal.

The league said there was no conclusive evidence that Grabovski bit Canadiens forward Max Pacioretty.

Pacioretty says he got a precautionary tetanus shot after the incident in Toronto's 6-0 victory. The forward emerged from the skirmish showing his arm to the officials and claiming that Grabovski bit him.

"It was an emotional game," Pacioretty said Monday. "It got out of hand. People were fired up."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Sun rising on Jays' season

The Smashing Pumpkins' Tonight, Tonight blared from the press box Monday as Jose Bautista cracked balls from the batting cage at the Florida Auto Exchange Stadium.

The morning sun beat down on this slice of Florida while Bautista swung to Billy Corgan singing "Believe, believe in me, believe. That life can change, that you're not stuck in vain. We're not the same, we're different tonight."

Pitchers and catchers don't report until Tuesday but hopes are already sky high around the big-spending Blue Jays (73-89 last season, fourth in the AL East) in the wake of acquiring R.A. Dickey, Mark Buehrle, Josh Johnson, Jose Reyes, Melky Cabrera, Maicer Izturis and Emilio Bonifacio.

Jose Bautista on Monday in Dunedin, Fla. THE CANADIAN PRESS

"We were, I think, hopefully optimistic last year. But I think this year we expect to win, that's the difference," said Brandon Morrow.

"This team is built to win and that's all I've ever wanted. Just to get a chance to win," added fellow pitcher Ricky Romero.

But then he sounded what could be a familiar note of caution this spring training,

"On paper, we're a great team ... (but) it doesn't matter what kind of team you have on paper, you've still got to go out there and play. If anything, the target's grown a little bit on us. Obviously teams are going to want to beat us and they're going to see what we're all about."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Give yourself permission to dream. You may be a realist by nature but a little bit of fantasy is not a bad thing and could do wonders for your confidence. You may think of something you can use to your advantage.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Everything seems to be moving in the right direction for you now but the downside is that certain people are resentful of your success and may try to blow you off course. Don't let it happen. Be ruthless if you must.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Mercury, your ruler is on good terms with both Pluto and Saturn, so you will be thinking some pretty deep thoughts. Don't get too serious though. Yours is a sign that does best when things are kept as light-hearted as possible.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You are appreciated by a great many people, probably more than you realize, and some of those people will go out of their way to show their gratitude towards you today. Enjoy your good fortune. You thoroughly deserve it.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Changes on the work front will create new opportunities and if you are quick to react to them it won't be long before you are moving up in the world. Don't ever doubt that you are equal to the job — you're the best!

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Do you wish you were some place else than where you actually are? According to the planets, you are thinking about making some kind of move and it could be a big one. Don't just change the scenery, change your lifestyle too.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It's highly unlikely that you will get through the day without clashing with someone you believe is a threat to your security. You may in fact be entirely wrong, but it's better to be safe than sorry. Protect yourself.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Anyone who thinks they can get the better of you intellectually is living in cloud cuckoo land. Your sharp Scorpio mind will run circles around them today and they'll think twice before they take you on again.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Stick to your timetable today — don't let anything distract you or let anyone lead you astray. You are on a very tight schedule at the moment and the slightest deviation could be disastrous. Make sure you're well organized.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
There is a great deal of tension both at home and at work at the moment and the best way to get through it is to stay calm. Above all, watch what you say. You can be rather harsh in your comments sometimes.

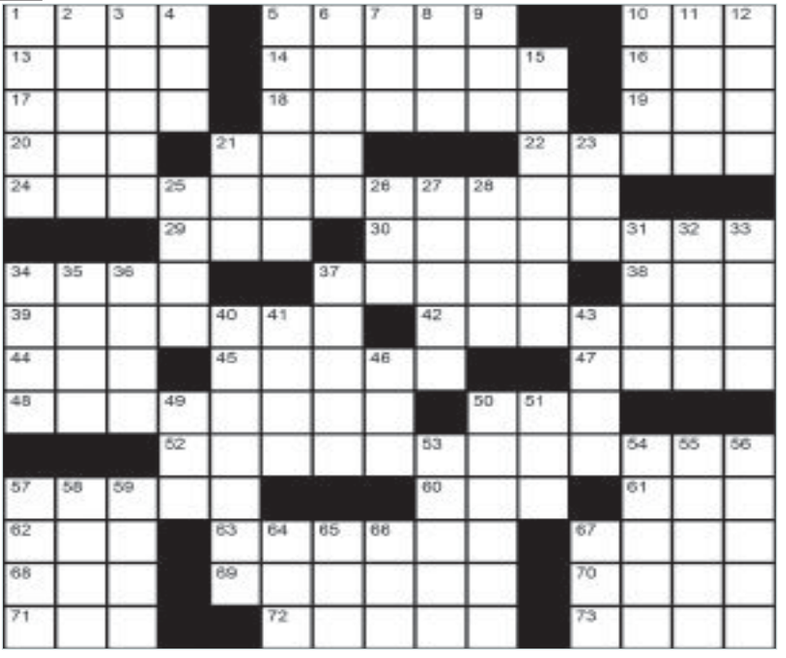
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You have a whole load of plans but not everyone in your social circle or at work seems to share your enthusiasm. But what of it? If you have to do it all yourself then you won't have to share the spoils!

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Mercury in your sign links with both Pluto and Saturn today, adding a sharp edge to your mind and an equally sharp edge to your tongue. Whatever it is you have to say, no one will fail to get the message.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

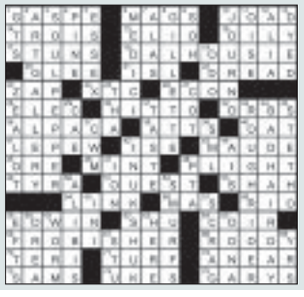
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Model search series, "The __"
5. Canadian supermodel coach on #1-Across, Coco __
10. Motorists org.
13. DC Comics supervillain, __ Kadabra
14. Sir __ Hillary (Everest mountaineer)
16. Median, mini-ly
17. 'Super', in slang
18. Go-__
19. __ Lanka
20. 'John Hancock', e.g.
21. Actor Mr. Tognazzi
22. Search engine
24. Canadian singer/songwriter sisters: 3 wds.
29. Untruth
30. Justin Bieber's 'Believe __'
34. __/__ radio
37. Canadian pianist Mr. Gould
38. Grey Cup org.
39. Chocolate/caramel/nougat treat: 2 wds.
42. Instant coffee brand
44. "...man ___ _ mouse?"
45. "The Simpsons" convenience store, Kwik-_-__
47. 'Pseud' suffix
48. Fruit sugar
50. Singer Janis
52. 2001 Kevin Spacey movie set in Newfoundland, "The ___ __"
57. Guitarist, Lenny __
60. Pre-A.D. time alternative
61. Rap star, Tone-__
62. Purpose
63. Yellow-bordered mag since 1888: 2 wds.
67. Morning talk's Kelly
68. Philosophy
69. Queen Elizabeth's youngest son
70. Russian ruler, variantly
71. PBS funding org.
72. __-face (Reversal)
73. Actor Mr. Donovan

Down
1. 1859 Charles Gounod opera
2. Aussie actress Ms. Cornish
3. Allison Janney's "The West Wing" role, C.J. __
4. Head hearer
5. Music style
6. Ancient theatre
7. "Pick a Puppy" channel
8. Gilligan's dwelling
9. 'Prop' suffix (Fuel)
10. Money
11. Supersonic interceptor aircraft developed-then-halted in Canada in the 1950s, __ Arrow
12. Currency exchange fee
15. Rehearsals: 2 wds.
21. Prefix with 'cycle'
23. Writer Mr. Milne's
25. Donations
26. Music direction, __ segno
27. Fragrance
28. First-rate
31. _-__ highway
32. Questionable
33. Li'l mandarin-like fruit
34. "I __ __ the opinion that..."
35. Dave __ (1965 PGA Championship winner)
36. Herr's wife
37. Fathom
40. Dr. Norman __
41. Quant _ __ (For my part, in French)
43. Hartford, __.
46. Gym workout unit, commonly
49. Our version of NASA
50. Encrypted: 2 wds.
51. Birthday changer
53. French composer Jacques
54. Miss Doolittle of theatre
55. Tom of "The Dukes of Hazzard"
56. Frighten
57. Bathroom = Salle de __
58. Stand up
59. Ms. Stone of flicks
64. Dictionary abbr.
65. Couple
66. Guy opposite
67. Sales slip, shortly

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

9		1				3		2
	2		8		5		7	
6			9		3			4
		6	2		4	9		
		7	1		6	8		
5			4		2			1
	9		7		1		4	
7		4				2		3

Yesterday's Sudoku

7	9	3	4	8	2	6	1	5
5	1	8	3	9	6	7	4	2
2	6	4	7	5	1	8	9	3
9	8	7	1	3	4	5	2	6
3	5	2	6	7	9	1	8	4
1	4	6	5	2	8	9	3	7
4	2	5	8	1	7	3	6	9
6	3	1	9	4	5	2	7	8
8	7	9	2	6	3	4	5	1

Weather

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Smooth, heated stones are used as an extension of the therapist's hands, creating heat that helps warm up tight muscles while creat-ing continuous relaxation.

RELAXATION MASSAGE 60 MIN.

Gentle movements that use smooth & gliding strokes at a slower pace with light pressure that brings calming to the mind.

PLUS FREE - Luscious Wash & Blow-Dry $27 value (with one of our rising stars).
PLUS FREE - 20$ Gift Card towards any hair service over $30
PLUS FREE 20$ Gift Card towards a 70 Minute Skin Repair Facial

HURRY ONLY 37 PACKAGES AVAILABLE, SO CALL CITY LOOKS AT 204-896-3177 NOW!

- Professional consultation, Cut & Style $33 (Jr. $)
- Rich winter root colour valued at $43 (Jr. $)
- Colour Refresh on ends valued at $20 (hi-lites extra)
- FREE Redken Moisture Shot valued at $20
- FREE Hand Paraffin Treatment valued at $15
- FREE Redken Rich Recovery treatment to take home (8.5oz. valued at $23.95) locks in colour & shine!

OUR GUARANTEE
If you're not happy with your hair we'll gladly redo it FREE or refund your money in FULL!
This promo is with our junior stylists only. Shoulder length & longer extra.

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SALON and SPA

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